

Mr. Doug Hayes
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June 2nd, 2006

MLPA Initiative staff
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1311
Sacramento, Ca 95814

Subject: Pubic comment on MLPA Initiative. Kelp Harvesting.

To whom it may concern,

The way our kelp resources are managed by the California Department of Fish and Game are appropriate as they stand now. With the large commercial kelp harvesters out of business, we have more kelp off our coast than in the last fifty years. Dividing the existing kelp beds into take/no take "areas" will be confusing and unnecessary.

I harvest kelp weekly from the Monterey Bay in kelp bed 220/221. I am always the only one out there. I already have to pass up a large area of kelp that is "off limits" for some reason. This closure was not based on science. The further I need to travel into the ocean to get kelp, the more dangerous it becomes. I do not have an "ocean going kelp harvesting ship". I am a 50 year old man with a 17 foot skiff! I HAVE to get this kelp to keep my abalone alive, so we all can eat them.

Please do not change the way our kelp resources are managed for the sake of change. Every study the DF&G (or anyone) has done shows that cutting kelp at the water line is basically like "mowing a lawn".

Although everybody touts aquaculture as our future, the ever increasing regulations are making it impractical.

Thanks for your consideration,

Doug Hayes
Owner, The California Abalone Company

cc: California Fish & Game Commission
California Resources Secretary, Mike Chrisman
California Assistant Secretary for Ocean and Coastal Policy, Brian Baird